

Brymore

experience to last a lifetime

Newsletter

December 2023

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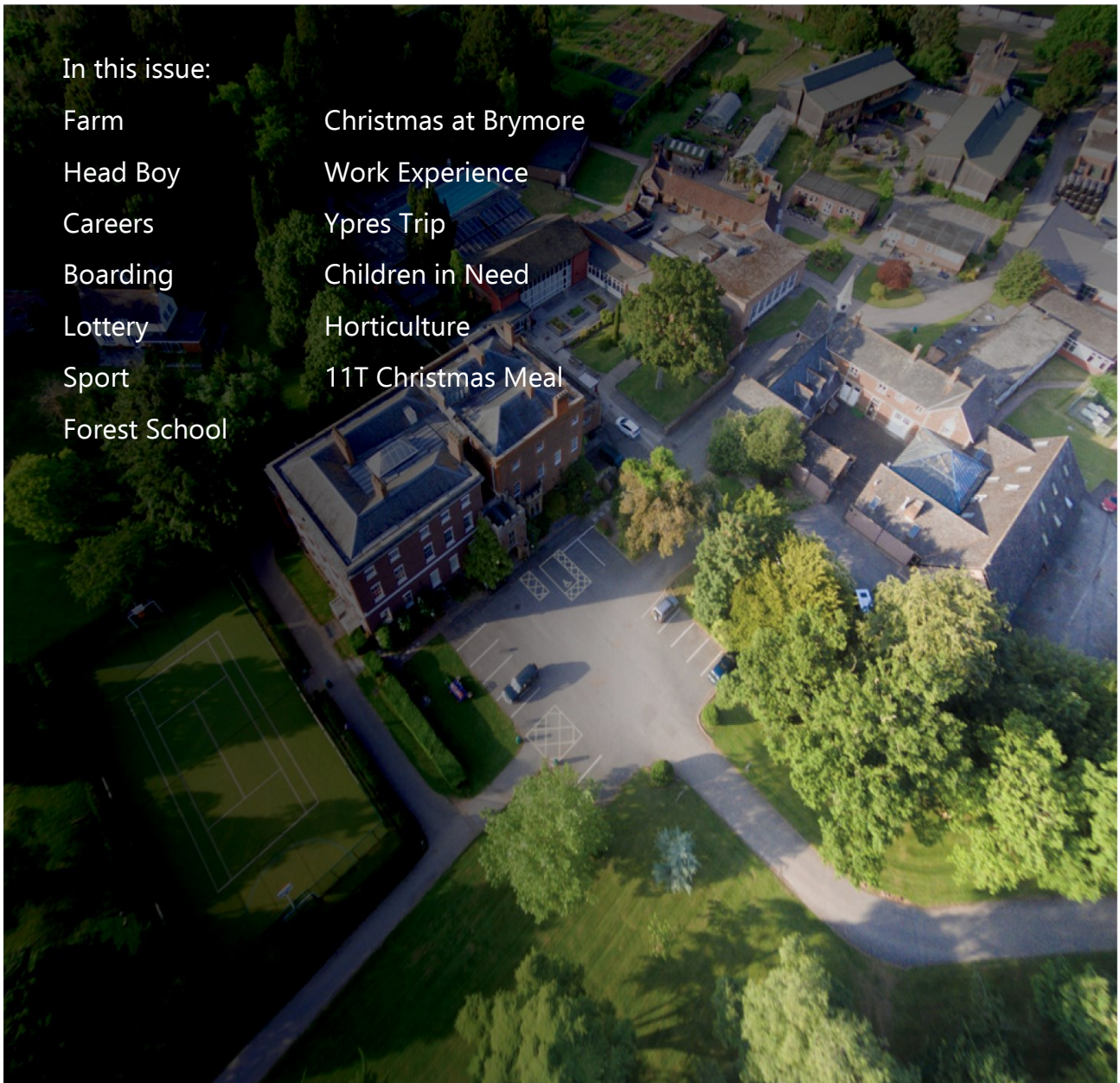
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Message from the Headteacher

Dear parents

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the Christmas Carol Service at the end of term. Sadly, I was unable to attend the lower school service as I was representing the school at a function in London on the Friday evening. I was extremely relieved that I was able to attend the upper school service, arriving in time for the performance of the school 'choir' or more accurately the first fifteen. This small part of Brymore's history epitomises everything that is good about the school. Many years ago, I am told that Mr Wilcocks was unable to convince enough boys to form a school choir. So, in typical Brymore fashion, Mr Spridgens turned to the senior rugby squad and told them they had to step up and sing at the Harvest Festival and Christmas Carol Concert. They duly obliged and another Brymore tradition was born which is now a highlight of both services. They are unlikely to ever win a singing competition, but I am always proud of the fact that they are prepared to step well out of their comfort zone in front of hundreds of people and give it a go.

The service itself was the culmination of the hours of hard work put in by both staff and boys. Mrs Davis devised the original plans and then Ms Doble took over the reins organising both events. Neither service would have been possible without numerous staff giving up their break and lunchtimes, listening to the boys read and sing whilst still ensuring all the other Christmas festivities took place during the last week of term. Another great team effort at the end of a very busy term. I would also like to thank all staff who have organised trips and visits, assisted with sporting fixtures, overseen Chads and fitness, run charity events, or have given up their own time to assist during evenings and weekends. Like many schools, we are facing several challenges with staff absence however our existing staff continue to support each other, and the boys, when they can.

The search for a new Headteacher continues and the latest plans for interviews are scheduled to take place in January. Sadly, Mr Kingston, the Farm Manager, is also due to leave Brymore in February. I know it is a decision he found hard to make having worked tirelessly for many years to develop the farm at Brymore into one of the most successful school farms in the country. He will be extremely difficult to replace and we have already started the process of looking for a new farm manager.

Finally, I hope you all manage to have some downtime over the next couple of weeks and that you are able to enjoy a wonderful Christmas with your family. Finding some time to slow down and enjoy some quality family time together is so important in our ever-busier world. I hope you have a successful 2024 and I look forward to seeing the boys back at Brymore in January, ready for another busy term.

Best wishes and Merry Christmas



Boarding

Christmas time is always a busy time of year as we celebrate the season and make sure boys are making the most of the festivities whilst also here at Brymore and within boarding we emphasis taking the time to think of others. Boys have really taken it upon themselves this term as there have been many opportunities to think of others. There have been continued funds raised for house-specific charities in addition to our annual charity campaign 'Smiles for Christmas campaign' as well as a non-uniform day for children in need.

Smiles for Christmas usually brings all the houses and boys together collecting food stuff and other gifts to be presented to the Salvation Army at the time of year they are most in need of these donations. Boys have taken this opportunity to bring in items from home and even go to the shops themselves to purchase food for those in a less fortunate position than them.

Year 7s are experiencing their first ever Brymore festive season, and Year 11s are enjoying their last ever Brymore Christmas! The cold, dark nights and mornings have not been deterring or preventing the vast array of activities, duties and general busyness of boarding at Brymore this term. The past two terms have been busy and eventful, with added energy levels as always coming from the junior boarding house and a wide range of equipment and activities available to all, including the expansion of the Iron Man club into the newly refurbished gym for some evening exercise!. Senior boys have taken on the responsibility of guiding and settling all new Brymore boys in Year 7 with mentoring going from strength to strength, whilst senior boys in Reid and School House continued to work hard and overcome the ever mounting pressures of academic studies plus all the added extras associated with being a Brymore boy.

Looking back with fond memories since September there has been much to celebrate and enjoy, from large school events such as harvest festival and cross country to listening to the boys talk with joy of the numerous external trips that have taken place this half term including, the skate park, attending local craft events, 10 pin bowling, cinema, various shopping trips and the time warp arcade.

As ever at Brymore, the festive build up to the Christmas holidays stretches over a few weeks (largely involving food!), with both boys and staff enjoying a number of events including the perfect Christmas meal at Blackmore Farm, Christmas lunch, a vast array of chocolate treats in the houses, house parties finished with the Christmas feast. This will be the last Brymore Christmas for our current Year 11 so please enjoy the holiday period. Before you know it, the run up to exams will soon be with us! (Mr Watts)



11T Festive Meal

On Monday 27th November, the Year 11s from Taylor House went to Blackmore Farm for a Christmas meal, along with myself and some of the tutors. Mr Willcocks and Mrs Strong joined us, along with Mr Underwood who is joining Brymore as T2 tutor and Science teacher after Christmas.



A lovely meal was enjoyed by all, who were happy to get in the festive spirit. Taylor House Captain Abe Tinney gave a fantastic speech thanking all staff and applause for the staff at Blackmore Farm. (Ms Carter)

Forest School

In Forest School this half term, the Y7s have been building dens and learning about tying knots for different situations. They will be putting these into practice in the New Year. The boys have also been making 'Gods Eyes' with sticks and wool and are rightly proud of their creations.



As the weather starts to get colder it is imperative that all boys arrive with the correct kit. This includes waterproof clothing and warm clothes; boys are able to wear a hat and scarf if they would like. (Ms Carter)

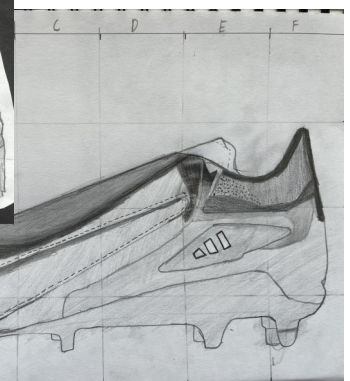
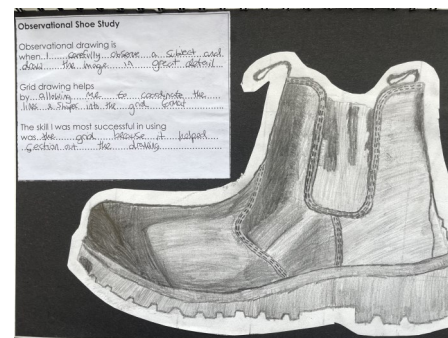
Children in Need

Our SSLT and Mrs Taylor-Lane organised a fundraiser on Children in Need day this half term. It started off with a non-school uniform day and was completed with a mammoth cake sale over break and lunch time and we raised over £680 for this worthy cause! Thank you to everyone that helped with cake sale donations and for supporting us with raising money. (Ms Warren)



Art

Year 9 Art students have been working on the formal drawing skills as part of the "Fresh Kicks" footwear design project. They have displayed and developed their ability to render accurate shapes and forms through grid drawing, creating a base layer of tone using posterization and layered complex gradients with detail to create realism. Throughout this process, our boys have challenged themselves to produce careful drawings with excellent results, well done Year 9! Pictured here are those by Fred Tuck, Oliver Wickens and Will Berryman. (Miss Zarins)



Christmas at Brymore

The last week of term before Christmas is always a very festive affair for the boys and staff. We began with the boarding house Christmas parties; a fun filled evening of frivolity and fizzy drinks along with some party games. We then hosted our Prefect Team at Blackmore Farm for a slap up meal followed the next day by our annual Christmas Jumper Day with prizes in assembly. The Christmas lunch was a superb affair and alongside seasonal tunes playing and the festive knitwear it made it a really fun day. The Thursday evening heralded the arrival of the boarding Christmas Feast night as the dining hall team served a veritable banquet of good food to the boys complete with deserts galore. It wouldn't be a Brymore festive week without the carol services and, as always, well attended by the families (standing room only!) and full of the true meaning of this time of year. An opportunity for us all to re-connect as the Brymore community. (Ms Warren)



Ski Trip

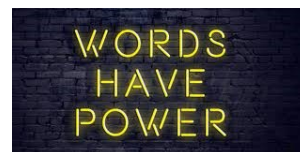
Over the Easter break 2024 Brymore Ski Tour 48 boys and staff will ski and snowboard in the charming traditional alpine resort that is Livigno, Italy. Tucked away on the Swiss border with its own micro-climate giving Livigno an outstanding snow record until late in the season - so we are all hoping for good snow! Brymore's ski tours are a great value package that always include eight days, seven nights away and six days of skiing or snowboarding. Staying in hotels the boys enjoy full board including hot mountain lunches, four hours of daily ski school and a full evening entertainment package that includes bowling, ice skating, swimming in a 'slide and fun' pool and an evening in a pizza restaurant. We hope to use the first week of the Christmas break for our annual ski tours from now on, as most schools do not break up until the week after. We can save a few hundred pounds per person and the slopes are much quieter at the start of the season. We hope to return to Folgarida in Italy Christmas 2024 where we had such a wonderful time last year. More details to follow when we return from our ski trip at Easter. (Mr Ashton)



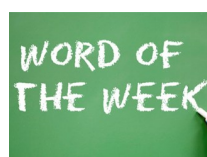
Literacy: Spotlight on vocabulary

Language is at the heart of education, and a knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary is necessary across the curriculum in order to achieve academic success. Studies have also conclusively linked vocabulary acquisition to social mobility and improving a child's economic chances. As well as this, there is also a strong correlation between breadth of vocabulary and mental health.

At Brymore a 'word of the week' is explored in our assemblies and tutorials. To the right are our words of the week for the Autumn term - see how many your son can remember and if he can use them in a conversation with you! (Mrs Taylor-Lane)



- Oscillated
- Mutability
- Sonorous
- Ferocity
- Scourge
- Reminisce
- Hamlet
- Outlandish
- Undulating
- Grimace
- Wretched



Grimace (*Sounds like: gri·muhs*) verb (an action word)

<p>Definition: To make an ugly or contorted facial expression showing disapproval</p>		
<p>Example: 'You go Tommo' said Charlie, grimacing in agony' Private Peaceful, Michael Morpurgo</p>	<p>Synonyms: Frown Scowl Smirk</p>	<p>Antonyms: Grin Beam Smile</p>



Careers

Careers has continued to be busy this half term. Paul Nethercott from Griffiths Engineering came in and met boys from years 9, 10 & 11. He told them about a wide range of opportunities in civil engineering and construction and encouraged them to consider this as a future careers option. In particular he talked about large infrastructure projects such as the new car park at Bristol International Airport - explaining how many different trades and skills were required. He also told boys that this is very much an area where qualified workers are in short supply.

Bridgwater and Taunton College have led an assembly about T Levels and Vocational courses, as well as a whole school assembly on the many and varied options currently available post-16. We are encouraging boys to look at the bigger picture and begin to consider how the choices they make now will affect their future opportunities. Year 10 boys have all been issued with log in details for the Grofar website where they can seek work experience placements. This is an excellent source of information, please do take a look and encourage your son to approach a suitable employer.

In January, Careers Breakfasts begin again, with the first being Automotive Engineering on Tuesday 9th January at 8.30am. The Spring college Open Days will be advertised on the board outside Room 13 and included in the Parent Bulletin. Please get in touch if there is a particular college you need information for and we will try to include it. (Rev Briggs)

Free
Entry

Brymore
experience to last a lifetime

Brymore Lambing

Saturday March 9th

10:30am - 3pm



An outing for the whole family to come and see our baby lambs and visit the ewes on their due dates.

We cannot promise lambing live but the opportunity to cuddle a lamb and see the newborns is just a step away with us at Brymore Academy.

With other animals to see on our farm and a few family friendly activities we definitely hope you will come and see us!

Refreshments available courtesy of the Friends of Brymore Association.

**Brymore Academy, Cannington, TA5 2NB
01278 652369 www.brymoreacademy.co.uk**

No dogs permitted and pregnant women should not enter the livestock shed.



Brymore Lottery

You have to be in it to win it and every penny of profit goes back to the school. So, if you are not already a member please consider joining to support the school. For further information please email Mrs Nash: lisa.nash@brymoreacademy.co.uk

The winners for this half term are:

1st £40 Mrs H Reardon

2nd £25 Mrs G Long

3rd £15 Mrs D Herbert

Horticulture

As November passes, the new leaf collection area is overflowing with leaves harvested by our Year 8 student. They have been busy gathering and storing this very important material which in 2 or 3 years time will become a key ingredient in our potting compost mix. When fully rotted down, the leaves become a lovely soft and crumbly product which provides a light and soft texture to our compost mix. Without it, the compost would be quite heavy and more expensive to produce.

Year 7 have been busy planting up tubs and hanging baskets with a variety of winter bedding: wallflowers, primroses and winter pansies. Some of these will be placed around the school site to brighten up areas and counteract the incoming winter gloom, whilst others were sold at the Winter fayre. There will also be some for sale at the Horti stall and money can be left in the honesty box, if unmanned.

The Year 11 boys who have provided sterling service to the department as a HoD during garden duties were invited to a skittles evening held at the Globe Inn, Cannington. Top skittler of the evening

was Freddie Farrance who threw the ball with such power the sticker uppers feared for their safety. We now sadly saying farewell to those boys as they need to concentrate on their GCSE revision and we wish them well.

Recruitment for HoD replacements occurred at the start of the half term with application forms and a round of interviews. Successful applicants are now proud owners of their Horti HoD badge and have been shadowing existing HoDs in the run up to the winter break. Our new HoDs are: Ben Attwell, Will Bond, Tristan Chandler, Jacob Creed, Richard Criddle, Oliver Haggett, Charlie Hector, Henry Hutchings, Rhys Ireland, Toby Knight, Harry Mant, Maxime Louis-André, Silas Pudge, Ben Webb, Ben Sawyer, Harrison Steward, Ethan Stewart, Fred Tuck and Oliver Winter.

On behalf of the Horticulture department, I'll sign off for the winter break wishing you a wonder Winter Solstice, a very cool Yule and a great growing season to come. (Mr Naum)

Message from the Head Boy

I think the one thing we always say at Brymore is how busy it is, but in all seriousness it is the truth for nearly all the boys. Those rugby players are at training once a week, doing fitness and the older boys doing circuits and that is without fitting in Chads. The HoDs are in the gardens or on the farm, along with the feeders and Year 8 boys, Year 11 had mock exams and so even without it being the lead up to Christmas, the evenings are packed for my fellow Brymore boys. Once we get into the final week before we break up it is all systems go and we have a lot of fun, the staff work hard to make sure we get the best they have to offer and I hope all the boys can appreciate that. A personal highlight for me was being part of Mr Thomas's final Prefect Meal at Blackmore Farm; an evening where the SSLT and Prefect team get to sit down together over a wonderful turkey feast. The boys and I really enjoyed it and at the end we said a big thank you to Mr and Mrs Dyer along with our SLT, who took us as a treat to say 'thank you' for helping around the school. Now, on the final week, the boys were busy preparing for our Christmas carol service which is a special day in our calendar. I hope every boy gets a well deserved break in the holidays and that whatever your Christmas looks like, you manage to enjoy it. (Oscar Warren)



Sports News

We have had another half term full of fixtures, including two Saturday ones at Queens and Taunton School respectively. We are ever hopeful that Year 9, 10 and 11 rugby boys can make their way into the floodlit area finals next term and the Year 10 team continue to storm their way through the County Cup, having played some terrific games. I would like to extend my personal thanks to Mr J Watts, Mr Lines and Mr Underwood for supporting fixtures and training, along with members of the premises team, who have supported at matches and by driving the buses. Rugby continues after Christmas and all new players are welcome along, with the regular attendees. Our SSLT are organising an inaugural rugby presentation at the end of the season and being up-to-date with Chads will be a determining factor for boys attendance from the rugby squads, so I would urge you to check your child is near target and if not, encourage them to run it as numbers are disappointing.



Cross Country starts fully after Christmas. However, during the last week we hosted the area final here and the boys did very well, with a number even making it to the Somerset County Cross Country which will be happening next term.

Tilly from Somerset Cricket Foundation came in and has been undertaking indoor cricket sessions with some of the Year 7 boys.

We have been seeing increased numbers using gym which is always good to see but can I take this time to remind boys that Chads and fitness is still important and that especially during times of stress (like exams) working on your physical health benefits the whole person.



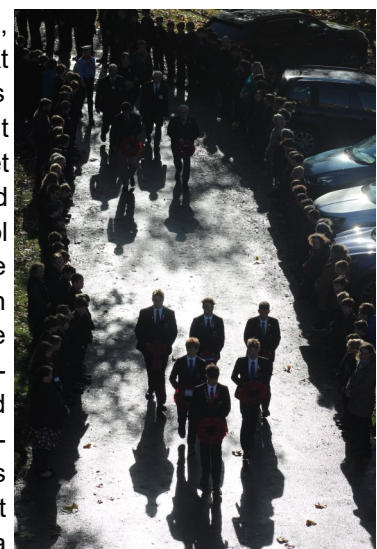
Boys need to take up opportunities to earn ties and physical and mental health during exam pressure.

Sports Studies boys in Year 11 should remember that the exam is looming after the festive break and maybe take some time to revise for it, along with ensuring coursework is complete as the deadline for this is January. Every boy has the ability to do well and we have given them all the tools to succeed at both exam and coursework, so hopefully Santa will gift some revision cards in their stockings! (Mr Williams)

Remembrance

For Armistice Day we remembered the fallen in our very own, and unique, way as our boys, staff and visitors lined the top end of the drive. At 11.00 am the clock ceased its chimes as the whole school held two minutes of silence before the Last Post was played. Mr Thomas read a poignant passage to everyone before the procession began, with the boys in cadet uniforms marching and then, led by the Head Boy, Deputy Head Boys and Assistant Head Boys carrying wreaths, moved slowly to the front of School

House, where the wreaths were placed in memory of all who have lost their lives. The procession was also joined by some of our Old Brymorian and the boys who went on the recent Ypres trip (who carried a football in a nod to the Christmas Day football game in the trenches) before the whole school filed through to observe the display and lay their own poppies. (Ms



Farm

We have had a very busy term down here on the farm. To welcome the boys back to school we had two new arrivals in the calving pens. We had our two of our dairy cows, Princess who calved a Aberdeen Angus X Heifer on the 20/10/23 followed by Caramel who calved a Aberdeen Angus X Bull calf on the 21st October 2023. Our calves have then been bucket reared by the boys during feeding duties twice a day.

We have now taken out our rams from our different flocks of sheep. We have left in one of our rams just to double check that each ewe has been served. The Year 10s helped set up our handling system to run our lambs through and take a selection of to market as store lambs. We also had a visit from the British Close Wool Society in November as we have entered our small flock into a flock competition where we came third with our Devon Close Wools, which was kindly judged by Mr John Witheridge and Ms Veronica Matthews.

The Year 7s have been busy weighing our turkeys this term and by recording this to we are able to track and monitor their growth in time for the end of half term ready for Christmas. As we completely sold out quickly this year! On that note we do also have plenty of lamb and pork still available to buy.

The Year 10s have been coming in for their Head of Department interviews, where once interviewed will be put on as a trial HOD period to see how well they work in this role. During our Wednesday fortnightly YFC meetings, the boys have been practising their haltering skills on the older calves, ready for next year's showing season. We have also had a visit from Mr Franks who gave the boys a talk about how he has diversified in jobs over time, starting out in the dairy industry then moving on to be an undertaker.

The Year 7s have been out to visit the market at Junction 24, with thanks to Greenslade Taylor Hunt, learning about the different careers within the agricultural industry. They learnt that there is a lot more to it than just being a farmer. They saw the different areas at market from the selling rings, holding pens, weighing scales and milking area. The Years 8s made a short trip up to the road to a neighbouring dairy farm with a rotary parlour. Thanks to Mr Hilton for taking time to give the boys a tour of the farm and answer some really interesting questions from the boys. They saw a different side and scale to farming than what a lot of them would normally have seen. We saw different job paths, learned about the costs of running something on that scale, how their feed and bedding is made for their cows and even saw an ex-student of Brymore working there now.

To finish the term we have had the arrival of three more calves. Quinn gave birth to an Aberdeen Angus X Heifer, Berry then followed with a British short horn bull calf and Ruby got the courage for her other fellow cow friends to give birth to her Aberdeen Angus bull calf the following day!

Last but definitely not the least, we were given the sad news that Mr Kingston will be leaving the school at the end of January 2024. Mr Kingston has been at Brymore for 19 years - he started on 4th July 2005! He has supported the farm through dramatic changes throughout his time here. From the lambing shed having a major upgrade to having a brand new milking parlour fitted, bringing Brymore farm into the 21st Century. He has been a fantastic role model to our students here and a real asset to all. Mr Kingston, you will be deeply missed by everyone here and we wish you the best of luck with your future. (Miss Marks)



Ypres Trip

Day 1

Our Belgium trip departed from school very early on the morning of Monday 16th October at 2am as we had to be at Dover for 7.30am ready to depart at 9.30am! It was a full day that included visits to Lijssenthoek British Cemetery and Visitor Centre, Talbot House museum and garden plus the Cells and Shooting Post in Poperinge.



Day 2

This was another packed day with some inspiring and thought provoking events. We started bright and early with a visit to the St Julien Canadian Memorial at Vancouver Corner, followed swiftly on to the awe inspiring Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest allied cemetery from World War 1. The boys had prepared by selecting a poem which they individually shared with one of the unnamed soldiers who may not have had anyone to speak to them in one hundred years. The boys and staff were moved and humbled by their experience which was put into context following the next stop at the German cemetery, Langemark. Following this, the boys experienced what life would have been like at the amazing Passchendaele Memorial Museum, walking through trenches and experiencing the smells and dangers of life as a soldier in World War 1. After a well deserved lunch, we went to Plug Street, to the site of The Christmas Truce. There the boys took part in a very moving presentation of a Brymore Football signed by all on the trip and then we all sang the carol Silent Night with one verse in German and one verse in English.

Next we were on our way to Essex Farm where the famous "In Flanders Fields" poem was written by the surgeon John McRae. The evening then ended at The Menin Gate with a poignant Last Post ceremony, where one boy was close to his Great, Great, Great Grandfather for the first time and able to thank him for his sacrifice.

Day 3

On this day the boys travelled to the Somme. They were able to take in Vimy Ridge (Canadian War Memorial), which was breathtaking, followed by a walk around Newfoundland Park (Canadian Memorial) where the boys saw the memorial to the 3000 Scottish Guard who were mown down by German machine guns. A stop at the Ulster Tower was also made where the boys had some hands on experience of artifacts from the war. The final memorial visited, fittingly, was Thiepval Memorial for those still missing. The boys laid a wreath and a poem they had written was read out followed by the playing of the last post and a minute silence. The boys were then able to find the names of relatives inscribed on the walls.

Day 4

On arrival at Dover we said a sad farewell to our guide Mike, who was so knowledgeable and approachable. The boys presented him with a certificate and a gift to show their appreciation and expressed their gratitude for all he had done for us. During the journey back to school, a stop was made at a service station and whilst we were there, two of the boys played a piano placed for anyone to play. Both received a round of applause, requests and thanks from members of the public! This was also an opportunity to give out certificates and awards to various students for their contribution to the trip.

It really was a wonderful and thought provoking trip with an amazing group of students and fellow staff. The students demonstrated outstanding behaviour and responses throughout the trip and were extremely well motivated. They displayed excellent empathy for the subject matter, displaying a wide knowledge of the subject area and asking thoughtful and insightful questions. (Mrs Franks)



2024 Upcoming Important Dates - Spring Term 2b & Summer Term 3a**Tuesday 2nd January 2024 (INSET DAY)**

3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 11 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud
6.00pm - 9.00pm All boarders return

Wednesday 3rd January

8.30am All out-boarders return
3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 11 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Wednesday 7th February

3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 8 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Thursday 8th February

1.15pm All students depart for Spring half-term
1.15pm School transport departs (NOT 4pm)
3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 8 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Monday 19th February (INSET DAY)

3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 10 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud
6.00pm - 9.00pm All boarders return

Tuesday 20th February

8.30am All out-boarders return
3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 10 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Thursday 28th March

3.45pm Students depart for Easter holidays

Summer Term 3a**Monday 15th April (INSET DAY)**

3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 9 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud
6.00pm - 9.00pm All boarders return

Tuesday 16th April

8.30am All out-boarders return
3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 9 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Monday 22nd April

3.00pm - 8.00 pm Year 7 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Tuesday 23rd April

3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 7 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Thursday 2nd May

4.00pm All students depart for May Day Bank Holiday weekend

Monday 6th May

6.00pm - 9.00pm All boarders return

Tuesday 7th May

8.30am All out-boarders return

Saturday 25th May

8.30am All out-boarders arrive as normal
11.30am Year 11 Leavers Service
1.30pm Sports Day

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